



# Module 2: DEERS



# Module Objectives

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**After this module, you should be able to:**

- Explain the purpose of DEERS
- Identify who determines TRICARE eligibility
- State how and when to update DEERS data



# Introduction to DEERS

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- In order for beneficiaries to be eligible for TRICARE benefits or to receive care in a military treatment facility, they must first be registered in the **Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS)**
- DEERS contains detailed personnel eligibility information for benefits distributed to uniformed service members, uniformed service retirees, other personnel as directed by the Department of Defense (DoD), and their eligible family members



# What is DEERS?

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- DEERS is a centralized DoD computer data repository of personnel and medical data
  - It is the definitive data source for identifying and verifying DoD affiliation
- It links the military personnel community, the Military Health System, and the regional contractor's DEERS Online Enrollment System
- DEERS is the record for eligibility, enrollment, primary care manager assignment, catastrophic caps, deductibles, and enrollment fee totals



# TRICARE Eligibility

- TRICARE eligibility is determined by the seven Uniformed Services
  - Army
  - Marine Corps
  - Navy
  - Air Force
  - Coast Guard
  - Public Health Service
  - National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration



- Beneficiaries should contact the nearest military personnel office, ID card-issuing facility, or the DEERS Support Office to address and get assistance with eligibility concerns



# DEERS Data

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- The following information can be found in DEERS:
  - Military sponsor's name
  - Family members' names
  - Mailing address and telephone number
  - Social Security Number
  - Date of birth
  - Gender
  - Program information (e.g., program eligibility, enrollment in other health insurance)



# Sponsor Status Change

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- There are certain changes in a sponsor's status that require updating DEERS records, such as:
  - Activation
  - Reenlistment
  - Separation
  - Retirement
  - Relocation/change of address
  - Medicare eligibility



# Family Member Update

- Common reasons to update DEERS records for family members include the following life events:
  - Marriage
  - Divorce
  - Birth
  - Adoption
  - Death
  - Relocation/change of address
  - Enlistment of a dependent child in the military
  - Child enrolled as a full-time college student beyond 21st birthday

(**NOTE:** Eligibility ends at graduation or 23rd birthday, whichever comes first.)
- It is the sponsor's responsibility to ensure the DEERS records are accurate and up to date for all eligible family members





# Updating Personal Information in DEERS

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- Beneficiaries can verify and update personal information in DEERS by:
  - Visiting the nearest military personnel office or local ID card-issuing facility
  - Contacting the DEERS Support Office (DSO): **1-800-538-9552** (TTY/TDD: **1-866-363-2883**)
  - Faxing changes to DSO: **1-831-655-8317**
  - Mailing address changes to DSO:  
DEERS Support Office  
Attn: COA  
400 Gigling Road  
Seaside, CA 93955-6771



# Updating Personal Information via Web

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- All stateside TRICARE-eligible service members, retirees, and their family members can update certain information via:
  - Beneficiary Web Enrollment (BWE) Web site:  
<https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/bwe/indexAction.do>
    - The site is linked directly to the DEERS database, so when information is updated, it not only updates in DEERS, but also with the respective regional contractor
    - BWE is not available overseas



# Special Eligibility and DEERS Enrollment Categories

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- Eligibility categories in which special provisions are made regarding DEERS enrollment and eligibility:
  - Newborns
  - Pre-Adoptive/Adopted Children
  - Transitional Survivors and Survivors
  - Incapacitated Dependent Children
  - Unremarried Former Spouses



# Newborns

- The Department of Defense requires all TRICARE-eligible beneficiaries to be registered in DEERS, including newborns
- However, newborns are TRICARE eligible from birth through the first year of life, even without being registered
  - **For 60 days after birth**, a newborn is covered under the TRICARE Prime option, as long as one additional family member is already enrolled in TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Prime Remote
  - **After the initial 60 days**, if the child is not registered in DEERS, any claims submitted will be processed under the TRICARE Standard option, a program option with greater out-of-pocket expenses for the beneficiary
  - **After 365 days**, if the child is not registered in DEERS, the child loses TRICARE eligibility until they are registered



# Pre-Adoptive/Adopted Children

- Pre-adoptive and adopted children are not eligible for TRICARE until they have been properly registered in DEERS
  - Once registered, pre-adoptive/adopted children are covered under TRICARE Prime, as long as one other family member is enrolled in Prime or Prime Remote; after 60 days, if child is not enrolled in Prime, claims will be processed under TRICARE Standard
- Parents should register the child once assigned legal custody, whether temporary or permanent
- Additional legal forms may be required by the sponsor's branch of Service for pending/permanent adoptions
  - Sponsors should contact their personnel offices to verify what documentation may be needed



# Registering Newborns, Pre-Adoptive/Adopted Children in DEERS

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- The following documents are required to register a child in DEERS:
  - A certificate of live birth issued by the hospital/birthing center or finalized adoption forms
  - A DD Form 1172, “Application for Uniformed Services Identification and Privilege Card” signed by the sponsor
    - If the sponsor is unable to sign in person, the DD Form 1172 must be notarized
  - For pre-adoptive/adopted children: Legal forms, as specified by the sponsor’s branch of Service, for pending/permanent adoptions



# Transitional Survivors and Survivors

- **“Transitional Survivors”** refers to family members (both spouses and children) of deceased sponsors; eligibility requirements for classification as a Transitional Survivor are different for spouses and children
  - Family members are entitled to TRICARE benefits as transitional survivors/survivors if their active duty service sponsor died while serving on active duty for a period of more than 30 days
  - TRICARE pays transitional survivor claims at the active duty family member payment rate and pays survivor claims at the retiree payment rate
- **“Survivor”** is the status of the spouse three years after the active duty member’s death
  - Spouses retain active duty family member status up to three years from the sponsor’s death; however, after the three-year anniversary of the sponsor’s death, their status changes to retiree family member





# Transitional Survivors and Survivors: Qualification Criteria

## Spouse

- Categorized as Transitional Survivors for three years from the date of death of their sponsor
- Thereafter, the surviving spouse converts to “Survivor” status; TRICARE benefits continue at the retiree payment rate

## Children

Transitional Survivor status will end:

- At age 21 or age 23, if enrolled full-time in an institution of higher education and dependent on sponsor for 50% of financial support

## Incapacitated Children

Incapacitated Children retain Transitional Survivor status until (whichever comes later):

- Three years from the sponsor’s date of death
- Turning age 21 or age 23, if enrolled full-time in an institution of higher education and dependent on sponsor for 50% of financial support
  - Thereafter, they are covered as if they are retiree family members conditionally





# Additional Special Eligibility Categories

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- Beneficiaries who fall under the following categories may remain eligible for TRICARE:
  - Family members of an active duty service member who was discharged as a result of a court-martial conviction or were separated for spouse or child abuse
  - Abused or former spouses and dependent children of service members who were eligible for retirement, but had retirement revoked as a result of abuse of the spouse or child
  - Spouses and children of representatives of NATO and Partners for Peace nations that are signatories to the respective Status of Forces Agreements with the U.S., while stationed in or passing through the U.S. on official business
- These beneficiaries should contact the nearest military personnel office to verify TRICARE eligibility



# Unremarried Former Spouses

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- They are no longer TRICARE eligible if they:
  - Re-marry, even if the remarriage ends in death or divorce
    - They may gain TRICARE eligibility under a new spouse
  - Purchase and are covered by an employer-sponsored health plan
  - Were the former spouse of a NATO or Partners for Peace nation member
- Unremarried former spouses should contact the nearest military personnel office to verify TRICARE eligibility



# **Congratulations! You've Completed Module 2: DEERS**

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